The consensus at the World Trade Organization (WTO) was reached in June 2022, based on the compromise between the EU, India, South Africa and the United States. The Commission regularly informed the Committee on International Trade throughout the process and presented the outcome\(^1\) to the Special Committee on the COVID-19 pandemic on 21 June 2022. The outcome includes clarifications and a waiver of certain obligations of the WTO Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (‘TRIPS Agreement’) to allow eligible WTO Members to authorise a company to manufacture and export COVID-19 vaccines in a fast and simplified manner without the consent of the patent owner.

The solution clarifies the TRIPS Agreement's flexibilities and simplifies the export of vaccines and ingredients. The outcome facilitates developing countries with know-how to scale up production capacity and supports manufacturing hubs. It should lead to developing countries equipping themselves with better legislative frameworks to use the TRIPS Agreement's flexibilities. Protection of intellectual property remains a key element for developing countries to incentivise investments to boost the production capacity of vaccines and other products.

The EU launched the Team Europe initiative\(^2\) to support manufacturing and access to vaccines, medicines and health technologies in Africa\(^3\). It will entail supply and demand sides, and the necessary enabling environment, including tackling regulatory and trade barriers. The EU is already supporting the expansion of local vaccine production in several African countries. A similar initiative in Latin America and Caribbean will support local vaccines production and the strengthening of health systems resilience.

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\(^1\) Ministerial decision on the TRIPS Agreement, [https://docs.wto.org/dol2fe/Pages/SS/directdoc.aspx?filename=q:/WT/MIN22/30.pdf&Open=True](https://docs.wto.org/dol2fe/Pages/SS/directdoc.aspx?filename=q:/WT/MIN22/30.pdf&Open=True)


\(^3\) Backed with an investment of EUR 1 billion from the EU budget and additional funds from the Member States.